

Catholic Theatre Conference

PRODUCTION CALENDAR

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EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETS DESPITE RECORD SNOW!

New York did its utmost to welcome the Executive Board in an exceptional manner by providing over 25 inches of snow! Previous directions on how to reach the place of meeting, Mrs. Wyatt's home, by means of a certain crosstown bus, were useless as no buses were running. Taxis were an unseen sight so our out-of-town visitors had to solve the subterranean mysteries of the subway system, arrive as nearby as possible and then literally plow through drifts the remainder of the way.

An advance poll by mail had promised the entire Board being in attendance with the exception of Vice-President, Jos. F. Rice of Los Angeles. Mr. Rice sent his greetings along with his regrets for not being able to make the cross-country trip at that time.

Father Nagle became marooned in his car for some 40 hours somewhere in Connecticut enroute to the meeting. Mr. Walter Kerr went to the Washington, D.C. station at 7:00 A.M. to learn that trains for New York were running four hours behind schedule. The delay plus the trip would have brought him to the meeting possibly in time for adjournment. Both Board members were in touch with us by phone.

Those who arrived in advance of the snow were Father Schroeder from Du-buque; Sister Thomas More, Sinsinawa, Wisconsin; Sister Maria Ancilla, West Hartford, Conn., Father Guyon, Green Bay, Wisconsin and Miss Sally Moorman of Cleves, Ohio.

Sister Alicette of Cambridge, Mass., chairman of the New England Region and Mr. W. L. H. Bunker of Philadelphia, Mid-Atlantic Regional Chairman, were also present. Miss Moorman represented the East-Central Region as its chairman as well as being an Executive Board member.

The agenda covered some twenty points, highlights of which are covered in this issue.

A MORE UNITED FRONT

The Executive Board was unanimous in its decision that the Conference decide upon one BIG project each year and concentrate our efforts toward the furtherance of that project.

Plans are in the formulative stage to carry out the "universal" meaning of our title "Catholic Theatre". The Board would like to see every group throughout the Conference do the same play next season at approximately the same time. If it is impossible to produce the play at the scheduled time then it is hoped that the groups will include it sometime during their season. Thus, we would be presenting a solid front in a definite, concrete way and focus attention upon the united strength of the Conference.

Naturally, a play in order to be worthy of such concentrated universal production will have to be outstanding in many respects - not necessarily difficult, though, because we want all groups to be able to produce it.

The Board hopes to make an announcement soon regarding the selection of the play so that groups setting up their entire season in advance may have sufficient time to plan accordingly.

MEMBERS' PLAY BOUGHT FOR PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTION

October's Production Calendar made mention of the summer major production of St. Louis University. It was TELL YESTERDAY GOODBYE, written by Maxine Schlingman and Ruth Klein. The former is a member of the faculty and directed the production. The play was recently bought by Gustav Blum for Broadway production. Congratulations and best wishes for its success!

INCREASED SALES OF 1947 BULLETIN IMPERATIVE

The financial report given to the Executive Board regarding the Bulletin shows a loss of over \$200, despite the fact that over \$600 was derived from advertising income. The report included every cent of possible income from outstanding accounts for advertising and sale of copies. This means that over 500 additional copies must be sold in order to meet expenses.

Although each group submitting a picture paid for their own cut there were many other expenses. An entire new plate for the front cover had to be made due to the deletion of the word "national" from our title. Photographic expense for the Convention pictures plus cuts for the same were other items in addition to the cuts for the Mielziner and Ffolkes designs. The issue was larger and heavier, increasing the shipping and mailing expense. The cost of paper and printing have increased considerably.

In other words, we have to pay in order to have an outstanding publication. We can be justly proud of the 1947 Bulletin and because we know you are, the Board urges you to assist in removing the deficit and at the same time help to further publicize the Conference by increased sales.

There is no limit to the number you may have! Although various groups ordered 25 to 50 copies many others asked for only 2 or 3. We wonder if you were under the impression that the supply was limited as in former years. 2,000 were printed this year and there are approximately 1,000 still on hand.

Don't you think that each member of your drama group would enjoy having their own personal copy, not only for sentimental value but for its intrinsic worth? Let's see what we can do, all of us, to take that report out of the red!

BISHOP SHEIL AWARD

The Executive Board deemed it wise not to have a Bishop Sheil Playwriting Award in 1948 in view of the national attention being focused on the Christopher awards, announced in last month's Calendar. It is feared that there would be a very limited number of entries with no prize-winning script; therefore, it would be prudent to hold the award in abeyance until another year.

FATHER DONOHUE RECOVERED AND BACK TO WORK!

It is a pleasure to report that Father Donohue has said good-bye to hospitals and infirmaries and is ready to take his place again in Conference activities.

Aware of his interest and willingness to assume the undertaking, the Board appointed him Editor of the 1948 Bulletin.

We know Father will have many plans and ideas for the new issue. In the meantime the best way for us to give him the greatest assistance is by making sure that good pictures are taken of each production. When his call comes for material everyone will have the best photographs possible. Clear, sharp pictures will help give that professional touch to the 1948 Bulletin.

PUBLICITY

In order to set up and maintain a regular schedule of publicity the Board empowered the Executive Secretary to be responsible for the writing and dissemination of news releases. Weekly news stories will be sent out for inclusion in diocesan papers and other likely organs of publication. An effort will thus be made to keep the Conference in the public eye.

Items concerning Conference members and activities that would make for good news or feature stories for the readers in your area will be welcomed. Please send them to the Service Bureau along with any clippings you may locate in papers carrying Conference releases.

REMINDER TO DIRECTORS

Several directors would like to jog the memories of others, who, during one of the Convention sessions, expressed an interest in and promised to exchange programs.

And another mental pin-prick might be to remember to include on your programs (in a prominent spot!) that you are members of the Conference. Just another little expression of unity and publicity for the Conference. They all add up to an over-all awareness that we are in existence.

JUST A THOUGHT

Why not pass along to the Service Bureau one copy of your scripts at the close of each production? They can be of use to other groups for reading purposes and thus add to our library service.

A \$100.00 SURPRISE

Opening the mail at the Service Bureau is a constant revelation and is full of pleasant surprises. One of the most exciting was a recent letter from Sister Mary Immaculate of St. Joseph's Academy, Wheeling, West Virginia, enclosing a check for \$100! A few months prior she had written of her enthusiasm for the Conference and pledged a benefit performance. She fulfilled that pledge with the Genesiennes' presentation of a three act play entitled "Johnny-on-the-Spot".

You can readily understand why her interest, enterprise and dependability were recognized by the Board, who immediately proceeded to appoint Sister the chairman of the Southern region. (see story-page 5).

1948-49 DUES PAID

The Los Angeles Theatre Unit more than began the New Year right by paying both their 1947-48 AND 1948-49 dues long before 1947 bowed out of the picture. Just think - they're all paid up till Sept. 30, 1948 under the new fiscal year set-up! (See story on page 5). Now they can forget all about dues worries for 20 months.

Wouldn't you like to relieve your mind of that worry, too? Thanks to the Los Angeles Unit there is a new section of the dues ledger all set up and awaiting more 1948-49 payments.

BENEFIT PERFORMANCE N.Y. BLACKFRIARS' GUILD PLAY

Father Nagle has done it again! His latest play, written for the Blackfriars' Lenten production, is OUR LADY OF FATIMA. It is scheduled to run for six weeks, opening Feb. 12 with performances every evening except Wednesdays.

The performances for March 5 and 12 have been taken over by the Conference to raise money for the Service Bureau. All Conference members in the New York area, including nearby New Jersey, Conn., etc., are being urged to cooperate in selling out both these houses. The Conference will be publicized, the treasury aided and more people made aware of the Blackfriars' work in presenting just off Broadway new, timely and wholesome plays for Broadway consumption.

COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S THEATRES

Since a goodly portion of Conference membership is composed of college and high school groups, the Board is eager to cultivate and promote more interest and effort in organizing Community and Children's Theatres.

Graduates of our Catholic university and college groups are natural leaders for the formation of these units. Their training and experience in speech and the many phases of theatre can be valuable assets. Their interest in the Conference can be the spark that will bring good drama to many communities otherwise never touched by this rewarding experience. They can provide a wholesome outlet for the energies of people of all ages as well as supplying a training ground and an outlet for their talents.

Our youngsters of today will be the grownups of tomorrow who will be responsible, just as we are now, for helping to elevate taste, discernment and appreciation for better things in the entertainment field. The organization of Children's Theatres will go far in developing that discernment. They will supply an outlet for the restless energies and vivid imagination of childhood, train the youngsters and thus develop a reservoir of talent for high school, college, university and community groups, not to mention the fact that it will help draw their interest away from unsavory comic books and movies.

We recommend your consideration of the possibility of organizing either a Community or Children's Theatre within your area.

CORRECTION

The article in the December Calendar reporting on the Chicago Play Festival stated that "arrangements were under the supervision of Miss Therese Cuny". Miss Cuny expressed her wish to have it mentioned that a Board planned and supervised them. The Board was composed of Mr. Walter Bamberger, Mr. Sam Listerman, S.J., Sister Agnese and herself.

Your editor is happy to make the correction for we certainly believe in giving credit and recognition of their efforts in handling this large Festival.

MISSING SCRIPTS

Do you have any library scripts you forgot to return tucked away in a dark corner?

At the risk of sounding monotonous with the repetition of "the Board urges, the Board decided, the Board recommends, suggests," etc. and etc., your secretary broke down the report of the Board meeting into separate stories rather than embodying it all in one long, solid article. We trust it makes for interest and emphasis.

Now that a week's siege of the flu has been overcome your secretary hopes to restore the Service Bureau and the Calendar back to an "on-time" schedule. She begs your patience and consideration for just a little while.

Many thanks for all the Christmas remembrances that arrived at the Service Bureau. We hope the New Year brings all of you successful and outstanding productions.

NEW SCRIPTS FOR LIBRARY

The Candlelight Guild has made available copies of a 15 minute radio script, "BRIGHT LITTLE LIGHT", and a one act play, "THE YOUNG LIKE YOU". The play is an elaboration of the radio script and its playing time is one-half hour. Cast: 4 males and 3 females. Non-royalty. The scripts dramatize the story of the Feast of the Purification but could be suitably used on any program honoring Our Blessed Mother or any other program requiring religious material. The characters are Mary, Joseph, Simeon, Anna, along with the present day characters of Ellen, Pat and Father Brown. The final scene depicts an unusual episode with a surprise ending.

ON THE SEVENTH DAY by Rev. Urban Nagle, O.P. A modern morality play which has to do with the indoctrination of John Smith, American, by press, radio and movies. One simple set and small cast. Produced by the New York Blackfriars' last season as their Lenten play. (In manuscript form).

ONE HUNDRED NON-ROYALTY ONE ACT PLAYS by Kozlenko and ONE HUNDRED NON-ROYALTY RADIO PLAYS by the same compiler. The latter book contains both 15 minute and one-half hour scripts.

THE BIG HELP by Jean Kerr...a comedy in three acts for 6 men and 6 women.... one set. The cast is composed of a variety of types. Written in gay, lively dialogue with a sure sense of comedy this play should prove as popular as the playwright's dramatization of "Our Hearts Were Young and Gay". Published by The Dramatic Publishing Company, Chicago.

I LIKE IT HERE by A. B. Shiffrin...a provocative comedy concerning Willie Kringle, a refugee who likes it here well enough to set busily about making the ideals of democracy work. Produced on Broadway and the road with the leading roles played by Bert Lytell and Oscar Karlweis in 1946. 6 men, 3 women - published by Saml. French.

UNCERTAIN WINGS by Robt. Hill and Floyd Crutchfield...a high school comedy whose events are handled realistically from the attitude of the students themselves. The dialogue is youthful and sparkling...4 males, 5 females. Published by French.

COME OVER TO OUR HOUSE by Marrijane and Jos. Hayes...a play composed of a mixture of comedy lines, farcical situations and a worthwhile theme. Ideal for high schools. 8 males, 10 females. Published by French.

THE HITHER AND THITHER OF DANNY DITHER, a play with music. Play and lyrics by Jeremy Gury; music by Alex North, published by Edw. B. Marks Music Corp., RCA Bldg., Radio City, N. Y. This delightful operetta is the story of Danny Dither, office boy in Heaven for the Misses Faith, Hope and Charity, whose department is threatened with elimination by an "efficiency expert", Lucifer L. Lucas. Danny is sent down to earth to gather evidence that the department is still having some effect. Danny's adventures with the aid of his bright red "intercommunicating" earmuffs make this a charming and captivating production for children, adults or a cast composed of both.

Four major roles, flexible secondary roles and crowds. It can be performed by 20 or 120. Running time is 1 hour and 45 minutes; cuts are possible. Its production may be completely natural and informal or highly stylized. The score contains 16 gay and clever songs. The book is written in 2 acts and a prologue. There are opportunities for dancing, which may be simple pantomime or intricate choreography. It's title is captivating - just try saying it over and over!

FISCAL YEAR CHANGED

One of the major changes effected by the Board was the establishing of a new fiscal year. Instead of July 1 to June 30 our books and memberships will run from October 1 to September 30.

We believe this arrangement will be more satisfactory to everyone, especially to directors associated with high schools, colleges and universities. The end of the school year has found too many too busy with examinations and graduations and going away for the summer so that membership dues payments were overlooked. Fall brought many transfers with directors, who had taken care of dues, transferred to a school not associated with the Conference. Unpaid Conference schools received a new director, who was unfamiliar with the Conference, and thus dues were overlooked again. All in all two, and sometimes three, notices were sent out regarding delinquent dues.

The new plan should help to decrease the time and expense of so many notices as well as making dues come due at a time when everything is being put in order for the beginning of a new school year.

Groups who still haven't renewed their 1947-48 memberships are being sent another notice - this time a letter explaining the new fiscal year and pointing out the fact they still have nine months in which to receive service if they will renew at this time.

There is one word of caution, however. The treasury becomes quite low in June after the drain put upon it by the heavy postage and other expenditures necessary to run the Service Bureau. In order to insure the continuance of the work throughout the summer some income will be essential. It would be well for any groups that can pay their dues in advance to do so and facilitate the first year's change-over in our fiscal year. One group has already paid their 1948-49 dues. (See story on page 3).

WEST-CENTRAL REGION

Although Father R. A. Johnston, S.J., Director of St. Louis University Speech Dept., could not attend the Board meeting in his capacity as Chairman of the West-Central Region, he did send word that he is working hard on plans for the Play Festival to be held in St. Louis during March or April. He promises complete plans soon.

REGIONAL DIRECTORS APPOINTED

The Mountain region and the Southern region are the two most sparse areas in the Conference. In order to build up these sections by creating interest in the Conference and securing new members, the Executive Board appointed chairmen to assume this responsibility.

Sister M. Philip of St. Mary's of the Wasatch, Salt Lake City, was named to head the Mountain region. Sister is an interested and active Conference member, who along with the Catholic Theatre Guild of Salt Lake City are the only members in that area.

Sister Mary Immaculate, St. Joseph's Academy, Wheeling, West Virginia, was appointed to chairman the Southern region. Her interest and enthusiasm for the Conference has already been demonstrated in an outstanding way. (See page 3, col. 1 for story.) With a half-dozen or more members in that section Sister has the beginnings of a region.

It is hoped that by means of a one-day Drama Clinic for surrounding schools and colleges that interest in the Conference may be fostered.

Both appointments are contingent upon the appointees' acceptance but we're counting on these two energetic and sincere workers to assume the work of strengthening the Conference in their sections of the country.

PRODUCE MORE GHEON PLAYS

We hope that 1948 will bring production of more Gheon plays. The Board invites your interest in this Catholic French playwright and his plays.

Our library has translations of 12 of them. (For listing consult the Play List and Oct. 1947 issue of Calendar). If you are aware of anyone who has completed further translations we suggest your interesting the writer in making a copy available to the Conference; or, pass along the information to the Service Bureau and the contact will be made.

Father Legault's "Recollections of Gheon" during the Convention presents an inspiring challenge for the Conference to see that more of the American public is made aware of Gheon's work. Father Legault's talk is reprinted in the 1947 Bulletin for the benefit of those who did not hear it during the Convention. For those who did, a review would be very worthwhile.

C.U.'S NEW THEATRE

Catholic University will open their new theatre January 18 with STRANGER AT THE GATE by Patricia Treadwell. This is a revised version of the play first presented at C.U. during the summer of '43. This production will be directed by John Van Meter. The theatre seats 636 and its walls are covered with murals, stylized sketches of their productions during the last ten years.

NEWS BITS

Father O'Kane is back in the picture of Catholic Theatre Guild of Richmond activities after an illness that kept him in the hospital.

Sister Miriam of Brown County Ursulines has supplied the Service Bureau with several copies of the list of successful high school plays compiled by Miss Erna Kruckemeyer. This is the compilation promised by Miss Kruckemeyer during the East-Central regional meeting.

Mrs. Mirick has sent the library three copies of her latest revised version of STORM.

Father Bonn's biographical novel, "So Falls the Elm Tree", was the December selection of the Catholic Literary Foundation.

Father Nagle's book, "Uncle George and Uncle Malachy" has entered its second printing - Bruce Publishing Co.

Sister Mary Olive of St. Mary-of-the Woods College, Indiana and Mrs. Bujarski of Wichita have promised scripts to be sent to Declan McMullen Co., to be considered for publication. We are anxious to receive more originals. Remember the article "A Step Forward" in the November issue of the Calendar?

Immaculate Heart College, Los Angeles, is doing further work on the script, SONG OF THE SCAFFOLD. Joe Rice wrote of plans for another Summer Theatre, this time on campus.

To answer many inquiries: ALL GAUL IS DIVIDED is not available at present. Mr. McGiver writes that it "is tied up for the nonce and may still be done in the big league". He appreciates the interest in his play, particularly the attendance in Chicago at the Conference benefit performance.

CROSS-COUNTRY CIRCUIT

FORDHAM - repeat performances of AARON SLICK FROM PUNKIN CRICK presented during the Summer Seminar. Opening Jan. 29 it will run for two successive week-ends: Jan. 29 - Feb. 1 and Feb. 5 - 8. Directed by Edgar Kotten with settings by Max Sisk. This one of the most produced plays in America.

MANKATO, MINN. - Academy of Our Lady of Good Counsel (Sr. Phyllis) - SECRET WEAPON to be presented over KYSM. School now on air once a month.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN. - Academy of Holy Angels (Sr. Charitas) - SLEEPING BEAUTY OF LORELAND by Sophomores on Jan. 18. PITTSBURGH, PENNA. - C. T. Guild presents THE SHOW-OFF Jan. 28, 29 and 30 with a preview for Sisters on Jan. 24. Jan. 31 they do two "road" performances in New Castle.

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH - St. Mary's of the Wasatch (Sr. Philip) Campus Players, OUR HEARTS WERE YOUNG AND GAY - Jan. 27.

ST. JOSEPH, MINN. - College of St. Benedict - two speech minors will stage OUR HEARTS WERE YOUNG AND GAY for benefit of foreign Student Relief. (Sr. Marcine) WASHINGTON, D.C. - Fantasians of Dunbarton College - STARDUST, Jan. 16 & 18. (Miss Mary Gorman).

PAST PRODUCTIONS

LOS ANGELES - THE JOYOUS SEASON by Immaculate Heart College. WHISTLING IN THE DARK, Loyola High School. SONG OUT OF SORROW by Loyola University.

MONTREAL - St. Genesian Players - CHRISTMAS ON THE VILLAGE SQUARE.

RICHMOND - C. T. Guild - ONE PUNCH JUDY in Sandston, Virginia.

SHARON HILL, PA. - School of the Holy Child, Dicken's CHRISTMAS CAROL.

WASHINGTON, D.C. - C.U.'s production of Jean Kerr's new comedy, JENNY KISSED ME, directed by Walter Kerr; set by D. Gilman. W. HARTFORD - Mt. St. Jos. Academy - Msgr. Benson's BETHLEHEM.

DETROIT - WINTERSET by new member, Univ. of Detroit, with grown up graduate of C.T. Children's Stage playing the feminine lead.

NOTE: - News of past and future productions has been sparse. WHAT are you producing and WHEN? Please send advance dates as far as possible so Conference members in your area may plan to see your productions....and you may attend theirs.

